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Message Text

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15
ACTION NEA-10

INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 SAB-01 PM-04 NSC-05 SP-02 SS-15 CIAE-00

DODE-00 INR-07 NSAE-00 PA-01 USIA-06 PRS-01 /053 W
---------- 013481
R 211010Z AUG 75
FM AMEMBASSY DAMASCUS
TO SECSTATE WASHDC 4341
INFO AMEMBASSY AMMAN
AMEMBASSY BEIRUT
AMEMBASSY CAIRO
AMCONSUL JERUSALEM
AMEMBASSY TEL AVIV

C O N F I D E N T I A L DAMASCUS 3227

E.O. 11652: GDS
TAGS: PFOR, SY, JO
SUBJECT: HUSSEIN VISIT TO SYRIA

1. HUSSEIN VISIT PROCEEDING SMOOTHLY. KING SPENT FIRST TWO NIGHTS IN SYRIAN MOUNTAIN RESORT NEAR CAPITAL AND HAD SEVERAL PRIVATE SESSIONS WITH ASAD WHO ALSO ACCOMPANIED HIM ON TOUR OF KUNEITRA. ASAD FLEW WITH ROYAL PARTY TO LATAKIA FOR TWO NIGHT STAY AUGUST 20. KING WILL RETURN DAMASCUS AND DEPART FOR AMMAN AT APPROXIMATELY NOON FRIDAY, AUGUST 22.

2. NEWS MEDIA HAVE BEEN EXAGGERATING POPULAR TURNOUT FOR HUSSEIN. CAPITAL IS DECORATED AS NORMAL WITH PHOTOGRAPHS AND FLAGS IN HONOR VISITING CHIEF OF STATE. MINIMAL POPULAR INTEREST. OF THE SEVERAL CHIEFS OF STATE VISITING DAMASCUS DURING THE PAST YEAR, ONLY FAISAL IN JANUARY BROUGHT THE ORDINARILY BLASE DAMASCENE INTO THE STREETS. AS A MARK OF ITS ESTEEM FOR HUSSEIN, SARG STATIONED THE SAME SIZED CLAQUE AS IT DID FOR FAISAL AT THE AIRPORT RECEPTION, ABOUT 300 SOLDIERS AND SECURITY AGENTS IN CIVILIAN DRESS. THAT GROUP SHOUTED THE PREPARED SLOGANS "ONE ARMY, ONE PEOPLE." ASSORTED SECURITY TYPES IN THEIR BELL-BOTTOM TROUSERS
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AND SHORT HAIRCUTS WERE THE ONLY EVIDENCE OF DAMASCUS

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"MASSES" LINING THE STREETS FOR THE PROCESSION FROM THE
AIRPORT.

3. SECURITY PRECAUTIONS WERE GENERALLY STRICT ALTHOUGH
SOMEWHAT LESS THAN PREVAILED DURING SADAT'S MAY STOPOVER HERE.
WE HAVE UNCONFIRMED REPORT THAT IN DAYS PRIOR TO KING'S
ARRIVAL SARG ROUNDED UP SOME 200 PALESTINIANS INCLUDING
ALL KNOWN OR SUSPECTED MEMBERS OF HABASH'S PFLP.

4. WHILE RUMORS ABOUND IN THE CITY, STIMULATED
BY BEIRUT PRESS, OF HUSSEIN'S READINESS TO TAKE FURTHER
DRAMATIC STEPS TOWARDS ECONONOMIC, POLITICAL AND MILITARY
UNITY WITH SYRIA, THERE ARE NO HARD FACTS AVAILABLE.
WE DO NOT RULE OUT SYRO-JORDANIAN AGREEMENT TO CALL FOR
QUADRIPARTITE MEETING PRIOR TO NEXT ARAB SUMMIT.

5. MINIMIZE CONSIDERED.
MURPHY

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